

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAM-01 ACDA-07 /077 W
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R 280833Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9750

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 7797

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR UNGA KS KN US

SUBJ: ROK CONCERNS ABOUT US/DPRK CONTACT

REF: USUN 3922 (DTG 240031Z SEP 76)

1. USING GOVERNOR SCRANTON'S PRESS CONFERENCE COMMENTS (REFTEL) AS POINT OF DEPARTURE, AMERICAN BUREAU DIRECTOR PAK SANG-YONG BEDEVILLED POLCONS FOR AN HOUR OVER DINNER WITH HIS WORRIES ABOUT HOW USG MIGHT AT THIS JUNCTURE BETRAY SOUTH KOREANS' INTEREST BY BEGINNING DIRECT OR INDIRECT TALKS WITH NORTH KOREA. APPARENTLY ACTING UNDER INSTRUCTIONS (HIS DEPUTY SIMULTANEOUSLY WORKED OVER EMBOFF ON SAME SUBJECT), PAK PROBED HARD FOR ANY SIGNS THAT WE MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING GOING WITH DPRK WHICH WE WERE NOT DISCLOSING. HE NOT ONLY WORRIED ABOUT POSSIBLE INDIRECT CONTACT THROUGH CHINESE, RUSSIANS, POLES, CZECHS, RUMANIANS AND OTHERS, HE FRETTEED OVER POSSIBILITY U.S. MIGHT BE ENGAGING IN PRELIMINARY ADMINISTRATIVE TALKS OR DISCUSSION WITH NK OF VARIATIONS OR STATUS OF ATTENDEES AT FOUR POWER CONFERENCE. HE THEN WENT ON TO WORRY ABOUT POSSIBILITY ROK WOULD NOT BE ACCORDED FULL STATUS AT SUCH A MEETING, ABOUT VARIOUS WAYS ROK COULD BE DEALT OUT OF THE GAMS, AND ABOUT ELECTION YEAR TEMPTATIONS OFFERED PRESIDENT FORD TO MAKE QUICK DEAL WITH
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NORTH. AS POLITICIAN, PRESIDENT PAK HAD IMMEDIATELY PERCEIVED

THIS LATTER POSSIBILITY AND WORRIED ABOUT IT, SAID PAK SANG-YONG.

2. IN RESPONSE POLCOUNS SAID HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY DEALINGS WITH NORTH AND POINTED OUT REPEATEDLY THAT HE WAS SURE USG WOULD CONSULT AT ALL STEPS WITH ROK ON SUCH MATTERS, JUST AS IT ALWAYS HAD IN PAST.

3. AS USUAL IN SUCH SITUATIONS, THIS APPEARED TO DO LITTLE IF ANY GOOD AND MR. PAK WENT AWAY AS DOLEFUL AS HE HAD ARRIVED.

3. SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION SEPTEMBER 28, HOWEVER, BETWEEN EMBOFF AND MOFA OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR FOLLOWING NORTH KOREAN AFFAIRS, KIM CHAE-YONG, REVEALED NO SUCH CONCERN ABOUT NORTH KOREAN OVERTURES TO U.S. KIM NOTED CONSISTENT U.S. REFUSAL TO ENGAGE NORTH KOREANS IN DIALOGUE WITHOUT ROK, CITING PRESS ACCOUNTS OF MEETING BETWEEN ROK FONMIN AND SECSTATE.

4. ROK PRESS IS NOW CARRYING ACCOUNTS OF SECRETARY'S ASSURANCES TO FONMIN PAK TONG-CHING THAT USG WILL NOT DEAL UNILATERALLY WITH NORTH KOREANS. THIS SHOULD PUT THE PROBLEM TO REST FOR NOW. STERN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976SEOUL07797
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760365-0563
From: SEOUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760912/aaaaajpy.tel
Line Count: 83
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 USUN NEW YORK 3922
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 MAR 2004 by morefirh>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ROK CONCERNS ABOUT US/DPRK CONTACT
TAGS: PFOR, KS, KN, US, UNGA, (SCRANTON, WILLIAM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006